



DATE: 10 June 2011

ATTENTION: The News Editor

### **AGRA TEACHES SWAKARA FARMING**

Swakara farming is a tool to eradicate poverty and has the track record to prove it. Agra made this message clear at public lectures on swakara farming they presented as part of Agra's corporate social responsibility. Agra is of the opinion that the good performance of this industry should be pursued especially by communal farmers.

Six lectures, aiming at promoting swakara farming, were attended by a total of about 200 farmers. The lectures in Keetmanshoop, Karasburg and Gibeon, which is swakara farming area, were attended by existing swakara farmers as well as prospective swakara farmers who showed great interest in the potential and possibilities of farming this commodity.

In accordance with the Karakul Board's strategy to promote swakara farming in the north-western areas of Namibia, lectures were presented in Otjimbingwe, Uis and Usakos. Farmers attending these lectures were convinced of the viability of farming with swakara. Great optimism was shown and an eagerness to venture into farming swakara with its unique production system which fits extremely well in the arid areas of Namibia. Agra's inputs with regards to training in this area were highly appreciated and commended and at all events participants pleaded for more training and information days of this standard.

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The one-day lectures cover the swakara production system, preparation and marketing of the product and financial aspects of this type of farming. Farmers were motivated by the fact that the market for swakara is very well developed and that every Namibian can share in the prices achieved by swakara. Farmers unanimously expressed the need for financial support from Government to start and develop swakara farming in the communal areas.

The swakara Research and Training Fund, administered by the swakara Breeders Association of Namibia, co-financed the series of lectures. This concerned fund is financed by a non-statutory levy of N\$ 3.00 per pelt, paid by all pelt producers.

One more lecture in this series will be presented on 22 June 2011 at the Agra/Bank Windhoek seminar centre in Windhoek.

**Ends.**

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